

Message Text

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USICA FOR EU

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OGEN, SOPN, UR, US
SUBJECT: SLANDER CHARGES AGAINST TWO U.S.
CORRESPONDENTS

REF: MOSCOW 19779

1. CRAIG WHITNEY AND HAL PIPER WERE TODAY CALLED INTO THE MFA/PRESS DIVISION AT 1500 HRS AUGUST 24 AND SCOLDED BY PRESS DIVISION DEPUTY LEV KRYLOV FOR THEIR "SLANDEROUS ARTICLES AND DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR TOWARD THE COURT" DURING THEIR RECENT TRIAL FOR SLANDER AND SUBSEQUENT HEARINGS CONCERNING THE COURT'S JUDGMENT AGAINST THEM.

2. KRYLOV READ A PREPARED STATEMENT IN RUSSIAN, WHICH SECOND SECRETARY ALEXANDER VOZNIKOV TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH. IN PART, KRYLOV SAID THAT WHITNEY AND PIPER DESERVE TO BE DEPRIVED OF
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ACCREDITATION BECAUSE OF THEIR SLANDEROUS ARTICLES AND DISRESPECT FOR THE COURT HANDLING THE CASE AGAINST THEM, BUT, "GUIDED BY THE INTERESTS OF DEVELOPING SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS," AND TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THAT WHITNEY AND PIPER HAD PAID COURT COSTS AND THE FINES LEVIED AGAINST THEM, THE MFA WOULD "CONFINE ITSELF" TO A WARNING.

KRYLOV CONCLUDED BY EXPRESSING THE "HOPE" THAT BOTH WHITNEY AND PIPER WOULD "DRAW THE PROPER CONCLUSIONS"; NO ONE WOULD INTERFERE WITH THEIR FUNCTIONING AS CORRESPONDENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION, AS LONG AS "YOU PRINT NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH."

3. ONLY PIPER ENGAGED KRYLOV IN ANY DISCUSSION OF SUBSTANCE, AND IT WAS, APPARENTLY BRIEF. COMMENTING ON THE STATEMENT THAT DISRESPECT HAD BEEN SHOWN THE COURT, PIPER RECALLED THAT JUDGE ALMAZOV HAD HIMSELF STATED THAT HE AND WHITNEY NEED NOT ATTEND AN EARLY SESSION. IN REPLY, KRYLOV SAID THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN PRESENT IN COURT, WAS HIMSELF NOT A LAWYER, BUT THAT HE HAD ALMAZOV'S STATEMENT THAT WHITNEY AND PIPER SHOWED DISRESPECT FOR THE COURT. A BRIEF EXCHANGE ON THE LACK OF CONTROL BY ANY CORRESPONDENT OVER WHAT IS PRINTED IN HIS PAPER, WHICH IS IN ANY CASE INTENDED FOR DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED STATES, TERMINATED THIS ASPECT OF THE DISCUSSION.

4. THE TOTAL TIME IN KRYLOV'S OFFICE WAS SOMEWHAT AROUND HALF AN HOUR. BOTH WHITNEY AND PIPER CHARACTERIZE THE ATMOSPHERE AS LOOSE, RELAXED AND ABSENT TENSION. TOON

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